

VZCZCXYZ0027  
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHTH #0404 0541330  
ZNY EEEEE ZZH  
R 231330Z FEB 07  
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8229

UNCLAS E F T O ATHENS 000404

SIPDIS

NOFORN  
SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [KDEM](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [GR](#) [IR](#)  
SUBJECT: GREEK NGOS' WORK IN IRAN, BALKANS

REF: SECSTATE 2659

¶1. (SBU) Summary. Econoffs recently met with two Greek NGOs to talk about their work in the Balkan region and Iran. The European Public Law Center (EPLC) aims to promote democracy and the rule of law in the EU and the surrounding region. Founded in 1995, EPLC also has conducted projects in Iran. The Center for European Constitutional Law (CECL), also founded in 1995, has similar aims, and has worked throughout Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Both NGOs work often with Hellenic Aid, which provides funding for many of their projects, and both expressed an interest in working with USAID on future projects. End Summary

-----  
EUROPEAN PUBLIC LAW CENTER  
-----

¶2. (SBU) EPLC Center Director Flogaitis met with Econoffs to discuss the projects his organization conducted in Iran. The first project, called the Alexandros Project, ran from 2002 until 2005 and was developed to enhance legal and judicial reform in Iran. It consisted of activities aimed at the modernization and democratization of the Iranian judiciary. The highlight of the project was a joint judicial seminar, held in Tehran, in which a delegation from EPLC participated. The second project, named the Aristotelis Project, began in 2005 and is ongoing. The objective is to create a branch of EPLC in Tehran in order to provide supportive services for reform strategies to the Iranian government and the wider region. The project is in partnership with Shahid Beheshti University and is co-funded by the Hellenic MFA. In May 2006 a local team was recruited to establish the EPLC office, and the current director of the office is a local professor. The office is a free-standing building on the Shahid Beheshti campus and has publications and computers linked to the EPLC in Athens and to HeinOnline, a legal research database. EPLC currently has funding to continue the office until June and is applying for longer-term funding.

-----  
EPLC DIRECTOR'S RECENT VISIT TO TEHRAN  
-----

¶3. (SBU) Director Flogaitis recently travelled to Tehran for the inauguration of the center, and shared some impressions of the city and the university. Shahid Beheshti University's faculty consists of mostly French and U.S. educated professors, especially in the Human Rights department that Flogaitis was working with. At the university, they teach law and foreign politics to future diplomats of many countries, including Venezuela and the Phillipines. Flogaitis stated that he saw less women wearing the hijab than he had seen in Istanbul, and said that most Iranians he spoke with considered President Ahmadinejad to be foolish, especially concerning his views on the Holocaust. But they also said that Iranians will stand up with their government

when Americans fight it or are critical of it. Iranians, because they think they are the source of Islam, see themselves as the center of the region much like Greece was the center of its region in ancient times.

-----  
CENTER FOR EUROPEAN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW  
-----

¶4. (SBU) CECL's objective is to perform thoretical and applied scientific research in the field of Public Law and in relative branches of legal science. Many of the programs it conducts are funded by the EU, with some regional programs funded by Hellenic Aid. Recent and ongoing notable projects include seminars to train judges in Albania, advising the Ministry of Justice in Kosovo, and supporting governmental reform on child safety in Armenia.

-----  
COMMENT  
-----

¶5. (SBU) Comment: Both EPLC and CECL would welcome the opportunity to cooperate with the USG, perhaps through a joint project with USAID. Flogaitis, who will be visiting Washington in March, would welcome the opportunity for meetings at AID and/or State. End Comment.  
RIES